



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

June 19, 2020

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
United States Senate
425 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Ranking Member Cantwell:

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, I have been committed to using every resource at the FCC's disposal to deal with this unprecedented national emergency. It has been and remains critical that Americans maintain digital connectivity so that they can stay in touch with loved ones, telework, participate in telehealth and remote learning, and maintain the social distancing necessary to slow the spread of the coronavirus.

The times have required bold action to address the challenges American consumers have faced in staying connected during this pandemic. That is why, in mid-March, I asked broadband and telephone service providers to take the Keep Americans Connected Pledge—a voluntary commitment (1) not to terminate service to any residential or small business customers because of their inability to pay their bills due to the disruptions caused by the coronavirus pandemic; (2) to waive any late fees that any residential or small business customers may incur because of their economic circumstances related to the coronavirus pandemic; and (3) to open Wi-Fi hotspots to any American who needs them. I'm proud of the fact that 784 broadband and telephone service providers across the country, including all of our nation's largest providers, have taken the Pledge, agreeing to take these concrete steps to help Americans stay connected. They also have agreed to extend their Pledge commitments to consumers through June 30, 2020.

In addition, I challenged these providers to go above and beyond the Pledge and take additional steps to maintain or expand connectivity during the pandemic. Many have done just that. Examples include the expanded eligibility to AT&T's "Access from AT&T" (low-income) program to households participating in the National School Lunch Program and Head Start, Charter's program offering up to 100 Mbps broadband service for free for 60 days to new customer households with K-12 and/or college students and waiving installation fees for such households, Comcast's decision to increase broadband speeds for and offer 60 days free access to its Internet Essentials (low-income) program, and Verizon's plan providing low-cost 200 Mbps broadband to low-income households, waiving voice and Internet charges for Lifeline customers for two billing cycles, and tripling the data usage limit for students in Title I schools that are part of the Verizon Innovative Learning Program. I believe that these types of programs and offerings to consumers have made a positive difference for many Americans who—during

this national emergency more than ever—have needed to get and stay connected while the country deals with the pandemic.

This public-private partnership has been critical to American consumers. Without it, many consumers would have found it much more difficult, if not impossible, to conduct their daily lives.

The Pledge has been an extraordinary success, and I commend all of the broadband and telephone service providers that have stepped up to the plate to do the right thing during this national emergency. But these companies, especially small ones, cannot continue to provide service without being paid for an indefinite period of time; no business in any sector of our economy could. Accordingly, the Pledge will expire as currently scheduled on June 30.

As we transition out of the Pledge, I have called on broadband and telephone service providers to take steps to help ensure that American consumers and small businesses remain connected over the coming months. Specifically, I have asked these providers not to disconnect in July consumers and small businesses who have fallen behind on their bills as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Instead, I have urged them to place such consumers into payment plans and deferred payment arrangements to ensure that these consumers have a chance to catch up. I have also asked them to maintain and expand their plans for low-income families and veterans as well as their remote learning plans for students.

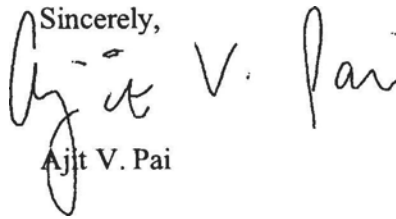
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The efforts of these companies are laudable, but I believe more is needed. Back in March, the Commission worked with you to secure funding for the COVID-19 Telehealth Program, which has aided hospitals, health care providers, and patients in some of the hardest-hit areas of the country. As we transition out of the Pledge, I believe now is the time for further legislation to ensure that doctors and patients, students and teachers, low-income families and veterans, those who have lost their jobs and livelihoods due to the pandemic and the accompanying lockdowns, those in our cities and those in the countryside—in short, all Americans—remain connected until this emergency ends.

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Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
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June 19, 2020

The Honorable Chris Coons
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
125 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Ranking Member Coons:

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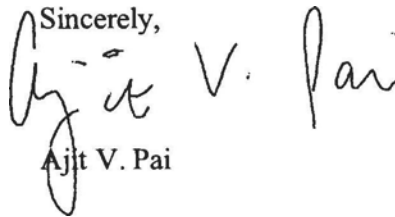
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Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

June 19, 2020

The Honorable Tom Graves
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
1016 Longworth Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Ranking Member Graves:

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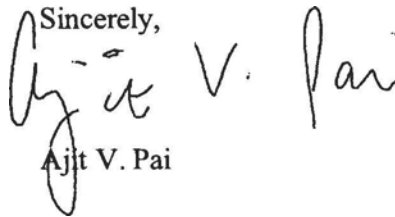
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Sincerely,

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
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OFFICE OF
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June 19, 2020

The Honorable John N. Kennedy
Chairman
Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
S-128 The Capital Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Kennedy:

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, I have been committed to using every resource at the FCC's disposal to deal with this unprecedented national emergency. It has been and remains critical that Americans maintain digital connectivity so that they can stay in touch with loved ones, telework, participate in telehealth and remote learning, and maintain the social distancing necessary to slow the spread of the coronavirus.

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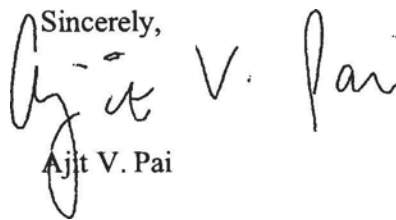
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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
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OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

June 19, 2020

The Honorable Frank Pallone
Chairman
Committee on Energy and Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Pallone:

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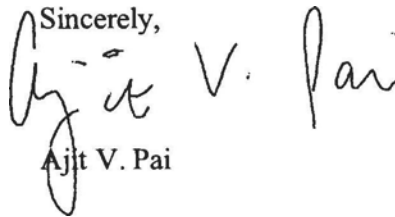
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Sincerely,

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June 19, 2020

The Honorable Mike Quigley
Chairman
Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
2000 Rayburn House Office Building (G Floor)
Washington, DC 20515

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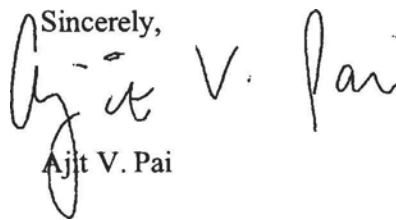
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The efforts of the Commission and the private sector as we transition out of the Pledge will afford Congress the opportunity to provide funding in July to help ensure that Americans have continued access to broadband and telephone services. And the Broadband Connectivity

and Digital Equity Framework proposed by Chairman Roger Wicker of the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the U.S. Senate and Ranking Member Greg Walden of the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the U.S. House of Representatives is a forward-thinking proposal. I welcome the opportunity to collaborate with you and your staff on this or other related legislative initiatives at your earliest convenience.

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Sincerely,

Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

June 19, 2020

The Honorable Greg Walden
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
2322A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Ranking Member Walden:

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, I have been committed to using every resource at the FCC's disposal to deal with this unprecedented national emergency. It has been and remains critical that Americans maintain digital connectivity so that they can stay in touch with loved ones, telework, participate in telehealth and remote learning, and maintain the social distancing necessary to slow the spread of the coronavirus.

The times have required bold action to address the challenges American consumers have faced in staying connected during this pandemic. That is why, in mid-March, I asked broadband and telephone service providers to take the Keep Americans Connected Pledge—a voluntary commitment (1) not to terminate service to any residential or small business customers because of their inability to pay their bills due to the disruptions caused by the coronavirus pandemic; (2) to waive any late fees that any residential or small business customers may incur because of their economic circumstances related to the coronavirus pandemic; and (3) to open Wi-Fi hotspots to any American who needs them. I'm proud of the fact that 784 broadband and telephone service providers across the country, including all of our nation's largest providers, have taken the Pledge, agreeing to take these concrete steps to help Americans stay connected. They also have agreed to extend their Pledge commitments to consumers through June 30, 2020.

In addition, I challenged these providers to go above and beyond the Pledge and take additional steps to maintain or expand connectivity during the pandemic. Many have done just that. Examples include the expanded eligibility to AT&T's "Access from AT&T" (low-income) program to households participating in the National School Lunch Program and Head Start, Charter's program offering up to 100 Mbps broadband service for free for 60 days to new customer households with K-12 and/or college students and waiving installation fees for such households, Comcast's decision to increase broadband speeds for and offer 60 days free access to its Internet Essentials (low-income) program, and Verizon's plan providing low-cost 200 Mbps broadband to low-income households, waiving voice and Internet charges for Lifeline customers for two billing cycles, and tripling the data usage limit for students in Title I schools that are part of the Verizon Innovative Learning Program. I believe that these types of programs and offerings to consumers have made a positive difference for many Americans who—during

this national emergency more than ever—have needed to get and stay connected while the country deals with the pandemic.

This public-private partnership has been critical to American consumers. Without it, many consumers would have found it much more difficult, if not impossible, to conduct their daily lives.

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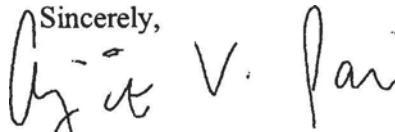
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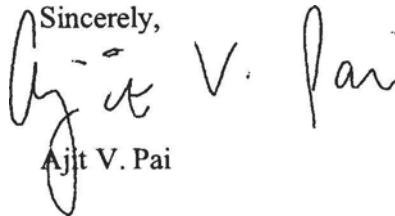
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